

*helping landowners
preserve northwest
Wisconsin's land legacy*

Volume 7, Fall 2007

The Last Parcel on Mt. Ashwabay

By Ruth Oppedahl

Last winter I skied my favorite loop at Mt. Ashwabay—the Anchor Trail. The long uphill from the tin shed at the Nourse Sugarbush to the top of the ridge got my heart pounding. Then I navigated the narrow, roller-coaster dips behind the downhill runs. At the far end of the ridge I stopped to catch my breath at a landing that opens up with views of the Sioux Valley. This is the last piece of land on Mt. Ashwabay the Conservancy is trying to get protected.

I had been up here in the summer and enjoyed the shady, deep forest and sight of three bears. Now that the earlier transactions had been successful, I was realizing the significance of this acquisition. The size (over 1100 acres) of land now protected and open to the public is equivalent to a new state park, but with a focus on preserving deep forest habitat and maintaining winter ski trails.

I remember Rep. Gary Sherman saying, “the people lead the way” and thought about the leap of faith our Land Projects Committee took when we looked at the map and decided that the Sugarbush acquisition needed to include the ski hill and all the Plum Creek Timber Corporation land in between. It was somewhat audacious to even propose this.

But something magical happened when Sen. Bob Jauch and Rep. Dave Obey came on board. Then, Governor Doyle took an interest in this public acquisition. The Ashwabay Educational Foundation successfully purchased the ski hill and the Department of Natural Resources secured a contract and brought over one million dollars to the table to purchase a big chunk of the Plum Creek Land.

Now, the last piece is ready to put in place. At the end of summer, the option to purchase the last 160 acres expires. Eighty percent of the funding is in place, and now we are asking you, our members, to consider making one extra gift this year—we call it a special appeal—to raise part of the \$100,000 match needed for Bayfield County to accept a Stewardship Fund grant that will help purchase this last piece. Then, we can all enjoy these trails as part of the permanent trail network at Mt. Ashwabay.

Please consider adding your support to this extraordinary project. ●



A winter scene from the Anchor Trail at Mt. Ashwabay.



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From the Director



By Ruth Oppedahl

My favorite part of this job is working with the people who help BRC in a myriad of ways. Out of the blue, people connect with us and give us what we need right when we need it.

One case in point is a serendipitous week when Rex Dollinger, Phil Peterson, and I were lamenting the huge amount of trail work that needed to be done this year. I went home worried about how we were going to keep up with all the trees that had fallen on the Brownstone Trail, and wet spots and signs on the Big Ravine Trails—when by chance, dropping my dog off at Becky Brown and Kim Bro's home, I heard that their 19-year old son Will was looking for a summer job. The same weekend I had a phone call from Jerry Johnson wondering how the trail work was going. Jerry arranged for a grant from the Adela Rindal Foundation to cover the summer trails position. So Will Bro has been with us this summer doing a terrific job maintaining the trails and learning what day-to-day life is like at a land trust.

When Will started to work here I told him how amazing it is that when we need something, somehow people give it to us. We needed a chainsaw, and Rex talked to Lou Reinstra, and next thing you know we have a chainsaw.

Soon, we will be asking you all for some more help. We are working to raise the local match required for Bayfield County to acquire the last 160 acres of the Plum Creek land on Mt. Ashwabay to ensure that the large block of forest will be left intact and the public recreation trails will be protected.

We also will be asking you to contact your Wisconsin legislators about the renewal of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund. This important fund is helping to purchase this last piece of Mt. Ashwabay, and has also invested in public purchases at the Corny Beach, Big Ravine, Nourse Sugarbush, and other areas that are now open for year-round public use.

I always joke with our board about "keeping the people in the picture." All the lands that we work to permanently protect are important to the plants and animals that use them, and the people who enjoy them.

As your regional land trust, we hope to find creative ways to spark initiatives that benefit people and aid in the conservation of our beautiful surroundings.

P.S. One way to stay in touch with our daily work is to check out our blog at www.brcland.org (click on Blog). ●



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The Bayfield Regional Conservancy is a non-profit land trust dedicated to the protection and preservation of natural areas, lakes, wetlands, farms and forests of northwestern Wisconsin. The Conservancy is a member-supported charitable organization and all gifts are tax-deductible. To learn more or to make a contribution, please contact us at the numbers above.



Will Bro in trailer stomping down elephant ears (Japanese Knotweed) cleared off the Brownstone Trail to be delivered to the City's composting site.



BRC News and Updates

Help Preserve Wisconsin's Stewardship Fund

Most of our acquisition projects in the Bayfield region would not have been possible without the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund. In our neck of the woods, the fund helped to acquire the Corny Beach, trails on Madeline Island, White River angler access, the Nourse Sugarbush, land in the Big Ravine, and other special areas.

The Stewardship Fund is up for renewal. The Fund is extremely popular with the public, and over 98 percent of the lands purchased are open to the public. However, some legislators in Madison have recently taken actions to slash the fund.

Many BRC members live throughout the state and utilize lands acquired with the Stewardship Fund. We are asking you to please contact your elected official and express your thoughts on the reauthorization of the Stewardship Fund. For your legislators' contact information, call 1-800-362-9472, or enter your home address on the following Web site: <http://waml.legis.state.wi.us/>. The BRC will be mailing you a copy of *Stories of Stewardship*, a beautiful little booklet that describes some of these special places. We hope you make your voice heard! ●



Volunteer Gene Brevold battles Japanese Knotweed on the Brownstone Trail.

Knotweed Knocked Out

Gene Brevold was one of 17 volunteers who helped remove Japanese Knotweed from the Brownstone Trail and other areas in Bayfield on July 11. The group made a dent in the knotweed population on the Brownstone Trail, Maggie's Restaurant parking lot, and on other public lands, but large patches of the plant are still found throughout Bayfield.

Japanese knotweed is a rapidly growing plant that is quick to shade out native species and garden cultivars. It takes over roadsides, residences, and community recreation areas, threatens stream banks and increases fire danger.

Homeowners who would like more information on controlling this invasive plant, also known as Elephant Ears or Bamboo, can see the three-page Homeowner's Guide to Japanese Knotweed Control available online at <http://www.northwoodscwma.org/> or by requesting a copy from the Bayfield Regional Conservancy. The Knotweed Knockout was sponsored by Apostle Islands Realty, Bayfield Regional Conservancy, National Park Service, Northwoods Cooperative Weed Management Area, and Wisconsin's Travel Green Program. ●

Preservation Through Pancakes!

BRC kicked off spring with a bang at the third annual Maple Syrup Pancake Breakfast held at the Mount Ashwabay lodge. One hundred sixty-four people were served a delicious breakfast of pancakes, blueberries, maple syrup, ham, apple sauce and apple cider, helping us raise over \$1,200! Twenty-eight volunteers helped out throughout the day and in addition to our pancake sales, Ros Nelson helped secure \$174 through the sale of a pancake bearing a resemblance to Mother Nature—\$87 for the pancake and \$87 in a matching donation.

Linda Hobbs of the Bay Area Active Sports Alliance led a group of intrepid hikers back to the sugarbush cabin where Danny Nourse showed them his maple sugaring set-up. This area is now designated as a State Natural Area—the highest form of protection in Wisconsin.

Our sponsors included: 6th Street Market, Apple Grove Inn, Apple Hill Orchard, Bayfield Apple Company, Shari and Mark Eggleston, Ehler's Store, Highland Valley Farm, Ashwabay Outdoor Educational Foundation, Marilyn & Danny Nourse, and O'Bryon's Village Inn. ●



Nancy Sandstrom, proud high bidder for the Mother Nature pancake!

BRC News and Updates



L-R: Arnie Carver, Shari Eggleston, Paige and Becky Carmel served lasagna to over 160 hungry kayakers at the Inland Sea Society's 2007 sea kayak symposium.

Fifth Annual Lasagna Dinner a Success

Once again, BRC held a lasagna dinner in conjunction with the Sea Kayak Symposium. This year's event was held June 15 at the Washburn Elementary School. Thirteen wonderful volunteers served 166 people throughout the evening. Over 30 lasagnas and desserts were prepared and donated by member volunteers.

The BRC took in over \$1600 and gained six new members with \$65 in membership fees.

Thank you to all of our volunteers for cooking, baking, and serving at the dinner. A special thanks to Shannon Swanstrom for taking the lead on this event and to the following local sponsors: Egg Toss, Ehlers Deli, O'Bryon's Village Inn, Sysco through field representative Todd Burger, and Wild By Nature. ●

Visit www.brcland.org

The Bayfield Regional Conservancy website has a new look! Since our last newsletter, we took the plunge and hired Graham Stegmann of Greysteg Design and Marketing to update our website. You are now able to move around the website with more ease, print maps, check our blog, read the newsletter or even donate conveniently through pay-pal. In addition, we would like to offer you the chance to save a little postage and paper by receiving an e-mail message inviting you to view upcoming newsletters on-line only. Just e-mail brc@brcland.org to get put on to our website-only newsletter list.

In our next newsletter, we will remind you about renewing your membership on line to save a little more on expenses. Every penny we save in the office can be put toward preserving the natural beauty of our area. ●

You are invited to the
**Annual Meeting of the Bayfield Regional Conservancy Saturday
 September 29, 2007**

at Bethesda Lutheran Church in Bayfield, WI
 109 S. 6th Street (Hwy 13)

9:00 a.m. Annual Meeting and slide show of conservation project updates and board elections.

1:00-4:00 p.m. Apple cider pressing, hikes at the Big Ravine and visit with a Red-tail Hawk.

An afternoon of autumn fun! Bring apples to press, or pick from the old orchard and bring clean containers to take some cider home. Volunteers will lead hikes on the Big Ravine Trails and you can meet a Red-Tail Hawk. Join us at the Peterson Farm: take Washington Ave out of Bayfield, through the cemetery to Betzold Rd at the top of the hill. Turn right onto Betzold, go 1/2 mile and turn right on Martin Rd and follow to the end.

For more information call the BRC at 715-779-5263. Hope to see you there!

Don Albrecht



In Memory

Karen Algire

Karen Algire passed away on March 23, 2007. Karen moved to the Bayfield area in 2001. She had retired as head of children services at the T.B. Scott Library in Merrill, Wis. Karen had a great love of the outdoors and nature. She spent much of her time hiking, biking, skiing, kayaking, and canoeing the trails, coastlines, and islands of northern Wisconsin.

Karen also loved teaching and continued to teach part time at the Bayfield School. She was involved in local conservation efforts, environmental sustainability projects, and outdoor recreation groups. Karen was a member of the Bayfield Regional Conservancy and her children Andrew, Sylvia, and George wanted memorials to come to our organization. Thanks to all of you who have honored Karen's memory with a gift to the BRC.

Karen will be remembered as a radiant woman of compassion, wisdom, and patience. She will be deeply missed.

Memorial gifts were received from Donald and Marian Alexander, Stephen Alexander & Tonia Starr, Tom Algire, Apostle Islands Realty, Bayfield School Staff, Bill Bombria, David A. Bratley, Jim & Joan Collins, Rex & Margaret Dollinger, Celia Duquette, Rodman & Shirley Gage Durfee, Mark & Elaine

Frankhart, Aliesa George, Manlio Gullotta, Kitty Hartnett, Virginia Hirsch, Linda Hobbs, Joclyn Jacobs & Mark Muslof, Beverly Jensch, Paul, Janine & Scott Johanik, Curtis & Ruth Johnson, League of Women Voters Board, Corinne Link, Paul and Paula Lundberg, Patrick & Anne Moretti, Holly & George Myers, Julie Nelson, Ruth Oppedahl, Meg and Eddie Park, Ruth Porter, Gennifer Reed, Stephany Smith, Margaret Sullivan, Carol Unger, and Linda Webster.

The Algire children would like us to pass on this message:

"We would like to thank friends and family that have given generously to Bayfield Regional Conservancy, Bayfield Heritage Society, Merrill TB Scott Library, and other organizations that Karen worked with and believed in. The Bayfield Regional Conservancy will use a portion of the donations to plant a tree and place a bench along the Brownstone Trail in Karen's memory. The children's department at Merrill T.B. Scott Library will use the donations to provide environmentally themed books and educational materials to teachers, parents, and children in the community. Thank you again for your generous donations." ●

Linda Hardy

By Aymee and David Balison

This year marks the seventh anniversary of the death of Linda Hardy of Bayfield, who passed away on June 8, 2000. The Bayfield Regional Conservancy recently received a memorial in her honor from her daughter, Aymee Balison. Those of you who were honored to know Linda were aware of the many wonderful things she did in her life. At the seven year anniversary of her death, I would like to share some of the high points for the people who did not know her.

Linda worked as an outreach specialist for the University of Wisconsin Cancer Center and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Cancer Council and various other capacities for five years. She left this position to be the Executive Director of the Breast Cancer Recovery Foundation and through this organization she started a retreat program for breast cancer survivors. Her pilot program consisted of a fly-fishing expedition in northern Wisconsin for breast cancer patients.

Linda lived by these words from Ghandi: "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." ●

Gifts in honor and memory

- In honor of the marriage of Brad and Joan Kozie, by Karin Kozie and Bill Route
- In honor of Philip and Sheree Peterson, by Stella and Kenneth Peterson
- In honor of Kitty Hartnett's 80th, by Linda Jorgenson
- In honor of Karin Kozie and Bill Route, by Emily and Daniel Kozie
- In memory of Beverly May, by Cyndi and Ted May

BRC Nature Notes

Great Gray Ghost

By Lynda Nedden-Durst

Over the past several winters, I have been completely amazed at the frequent sightings of great gray owls in Northern Wisconsin. Even as I have been researching to find out more about these birds, it is rare to see a map showing our area as a location to see great grays.

The first one I saw was on my commute to Bayfield in 1996. A huge bird flew gently over my car. You could almost feel the silence. I did not know immediately what I had just seen, but I knew it was too large for the owls I usually encountered in the area, so I looked it up in my bird book when I got home.

Over the next couple years, my sighting was confirmed again and again by other people in the area who had also seen great grays and by Phyllis Johnson, so there was no doubt! Phyllis invited me along on an adventure with Yvette Fleming and Lois Osterberg to hang baskets to attract the owls to nest in our area.

The great gray is known by many names, phantom of the north, spectral owl, Lapland owl, sooty owl, but my



Jodi Bates

favorite is the great gray ghost. That is what it is like to see one—it takes your breath away and you almost can't believe what you just saw.

The scientific name of the great gray is *Strix nebulosa*, "nebulosa" meaning misty or foggy. Habits of the great gray include flying short distances close to the ground and perching on low tree branches, signs or fence posts along roads.

Unfortunately, these habits tend to result in a high rate of roadside

deaths.

Over the Fourth of July weekend this summer, visitors were backed up one mile west of Cornucopia to photograph a very willing owl perched on an old sign post. It was nice to see people taking time to record their sighting of the beautiful bird I have been able to enjoy year-round. Sometimes I tend to take for granted the wildlife I see every day so seeing other people taking the time to stop and check it out reminds me of just how fortunate I am to live with a great gray ghost in my backyard. To find out more on owls, visit owlpages.com. ●

Needed

- Tools in good condition: shovel, loppers, sledge hammer, cordless drill and bits, hand saw
- New HP Color printer/scanner/print server (\$270)
- New Canon Powershot Digital camera (\$300)
- Bayfield County Aerial Photography (\$400)

If you can help with any of these items, call the Bayfield Regional Conservancy at 715-779-5263.

Thank You

- To Kenny Dobson for donating 70 yards of clean sand for the Big Ravine Trail
- To the Adela Rindal Foundation for a special trails donation to support our summer trails intern



Kenny Dobson at work on the Big Ravine Trail.

Consider a planned gift to the Bayfield Regional Conservancy

A planned gift to the Bayfield Regional Conservancy is a great way to give something back to the Bayfield region and its people. You might be surprised to know that your generosity can benefit you and your family financially, too.

A planned gift can be as simple as including the Bayfield Regional Conservancy in your will or naming the Conservancy as a beneficiary of an insurance policy, retirement plan, or certificate of deposit. We hope you will consider leaving a legacy to BRC and your other favorite charities.

We invite you to take time today to learn more about planned gifts. Please call BRC at 715-779-LAND (5263) to learn more about planned giving opportunities.

BRC Member Profile

Northern Migrations—Don't Just Fly By

Many of you have probably driven by an interesting little building on the edge of Washburn surrounded by many bird feeders, colorful banners, and flowers. But you may not have known that inside is a wealth of items and information for avid or backyard birders.



Carol and Denny

DeCourcy started Northern Migrations in March 2005 as a long time dream of owning their own business. Bird watching was something they had always had in common and feeding birds had been an interest since childhood.

The DeCourcys moved to the area from St. Cloud, Minnesota. Carol had worked in the retail business for many years and found the transition into owning her own quite a natural progression with the move to the Northwoods. She was interested in running a gift shop but felt that specializing in birds may be a good way to separate their shop from all the other gift shops in the area.

Anyone who has stopped in to look around the shop knows that Northern Migrations is far more than bird feeders and bird books. Carol is extremely knowledgeable about birds and what birds are in or passing through the area. She is great at sharing that knowledge with others. She will look up information she doesn't know and has even called customers to answer questions she couldn't answer on the spot.

Carol tries to keep the focus of her business on what her customers request as much as possible. She has noticed recycled products are starting to take off and is trying to expand her line of these items. In addition to sharing her own knowledge, Carol said she is constantly learning from the people who stop in her shop.

Carol and Denny became members of the Bayfield Regional Conservancy because they like to see thought behind development. They liked what the BRC does in the area to help preserve the natural areas and orchards for wildlife and people. ●



Join us! Call Contact BRC at (715) 779-5263 to discuss business membership opportunities.

Thanks to BRC Business Members

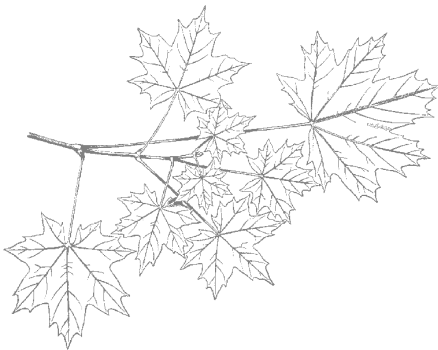
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The latest news from...

Bayfield Regional Conservancy

Is your membership up to date?

Please check the date on your mailing label to be sure your membership is current. Sometimes our members are considered personal members and other times business members. Other times, a person may be both. If you are listed incorrectly, please let us know so we can make the correction in our data base and thank you for understanding if we have made a mistake.



Don Albrecht

Come Join Us!
Bayfield Regional Conservancy Annual Meeting
(and hiking, apple cider pressing, and more!)

Saturday, September 29

9:00 a.m.: Annual Meeting
1:00-4:00 p.m.: An afternoon of fun

Bring apples to press, or pick from the old orchard and bring clean containers to take some cider home. Volunteers will lead hikes on the Big Ravine Trails and you can meet a Red-Tail Hawk. Join us at the Peterson Farm: take Washington Ave out of Bayfield, through the cemetery to Betzold Rd at the top of the hill. Turn right onto Betzold, go 1/2 mile and turn right on Martin Rd and follow to the end.

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