

“Hygge” featured at Annual Meeting, Appreciation Dinner!



The 2016 Friends of the KVR Annual meeting will be held on Saturday, October 29 at 5:30 pm at the La Farge Community Center. This required but brief meeting of the membership is conducted to review the events of the last year, elect new board members, and answer any questions from the members. Your input is important, and your attendance is encouraged. A time of Danish “hygge” will follow at 6 pm.

“Hygge” at the Annual Meeting? What’s that? Hygge (pronounced hooga) is a Danish word that is difficult to translate. The best start is to say it’s something cozy or homey. It often includes warm candlelight and good food. For that, Joanne Shird and her committee will provide another wonderful home cooked meal. Hygge also involves creating a nice atmosphere. Live music will accomplish that! After the meal, look forward to “hyggelig” conversation that avoids controversy and negativism and focuses on being in the moment.

The meal is provided free of charge, but *please contact Joanne at joannes@mwt.net or 608 625-2768 by October 21* to make your reservation. (Use your hyggelig spirit, and call today to avoid the last minute rush!) Beverages will be available by donation.

Hygge is “we time” not “me time”. We will celebrate our collective accomplishments at the KVR over the last year. It will be an evening of good fellowship that you won’t want to miss.

FRIENDS EVENTS

8th Annual Photo Contest, Show Entry deadline Oct. 15

Upload up to 3 photos of KVR (full details at www.kickapoofriends.org). People’s Choice voting at the Visitor Center Nov. 7-30. Winners in Adult and Youth Divisions receive \$50 prize!

Annual Meeting & Appreciation Dinner

Saturday, Oct. 29 5:30 pm

Held at the LaFarge Community Center.

Paint with Friends

Friday, Nov. 18 6-8 pm

Create a 16” x 20” rustic wooden sign. Sign design options will be emailed to those who register. Limited to 18 adults. *Fee:* \$45/person; \$40.50/KVR Friend. *Registration Deadline:* Nov. 12.

Holiday Happening

Saturday, Dec. 3 1-7 pm

String Ties Concert at 7:30.

Winterfest

Saturday, Jan. 14 8:30 am-4 pm

Many exciting events inside and out! Lions Club Chili Contest! Auction! Fund raiser for Education Programs. Many volunteers needed!

FRIENDS Connection

THE NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS OF THE KICKAPOO VALLEY RESERVE • (608) 625-2960 • kickapoofriends.org • Volume 13, Issue 2

Jane Schmidt is First to Complete 2016 KVR Trail Challenge



The Kickapoo Valley Reserve is Jane Schmidt’s go-to place for stress relief.

“It’s my bathtub,” she says. “I’m kind of a fast person so walking the trails is good for me. I tell people it’s for my dogs, but it’s really as much for me. It slows me down and helps me see things better.”

Schmidt, owner of Fitness Choices and author of “Not a Perfect Fit, Stories from Jane’s World,” was first to complete the 2016 KVR Trail Challenge. She started Jan. 2 and finished June 10. She hiked (and still hikes) every day, often just her and her pups Finnegan, Tete and Ramie, occasionally with a friend, and weekends with partner Dane Thompson.

KVR trail crew leader Jackie Yocum came up with the trail challenge idea. “We wanted to encourage people to be active and explore some of the less traveled KVR trails,” said KVR events coordinator Sadie Urban. “I followed Jane’s progress and beautiful nature photography on Facebook, which often included her insightful and entertaining opinion of each trail.”

On weekends, Schmidt hiked several of the 55 trail segments listed in the challenge together, knocking off six to seven miles. Her longest hike was nine miles. “I love walking,” she says. “It gives me time to think without distractions.” She’s not sure how many miles she hiked, but knows it’s a lot more than the miles cited on the challenge sheet, counting distance in and out, and repeats on paved old Hwy 131 when snow was too deep on other trails. Those repeats kept her from reaching her personal goal, which was to finish by March.

She hiked most of the trails in winter. “I’ve always liked to hike in the winter, but this made me realize it’s my favorite time to hike,” she says. “I didn’t have to deal with tick protection or worry about the pups disturbing anyone.”

Schmidt kept a diary and always took her camera. She saw rabbits, squirrels, hawks and eagles, and, in spring, many sandhill cranes. “The eastern and northern trail segments were the most exciting,” she says. “My favorite was Big Valley Trail. It’s just amazing. After coming down from the ridge, you enter a sweet valley with rock outcroppings, a stream and a bridge.”

“These trails are the best kept secret in this whole area,” Schmidt says. “It is my home away from home. I feel comfortable there. I’ve backpacked in on both Star Valley and the West Ridge trails to stay overnight. It feels like you’re a million miles away! Both times I was serenaded to sleep by the coyotes howling.”

She was never afraid, but she says there were surprises. Like when she and Dane encountered rushing water on Hoot Owl Trail. “It was cold, and the current strong,” she recalls. “I had to carry Raime when he slipped.”

By Sept. 11, Jane, who has had two hip replacements, had finished 12 days of re-hiking all the trails and was finishing the South trail segment, this time keeping track of mileage with a pedometer. “The trails are in great shape thanks to the hard-working KVR staff,” she says. “Anyone can do this. The greatest way to get up close and personal with your Reserve is to get out and try a new trail every week. There’s plenty of time to complete the challenge this Fall.”



Contributor Joan Kent is a retired journalist who lives in Stark township with her husband Don and their cats Liza and Misty.

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FRIENDS Connection

Holiday Happening December 3



Friends of the Reserve will welcome the season with the 2016 Holiday Happening on Saturday, December 3, in conjunction with the La Farge Old Fashioned Christmas. Activities at the Reserve will begin at 1:00 with the traditional **Cookie Walk** featuring baked holiday goodies prepared by Friends of the Reserve and sold by the pound. The variety of treats available never disappoints! Come early for the greatest selection.

For the second year, Friends of the Reserve **artists and craftspeople** will be displaying their wares from 1:00-5:00 in the meeting room. You will find cards and prints from Monica Yagel, Origami ornaments from Peg La Martina, and hand knit and felted items as well as foodstuffs and creams from Echo Valley. Wooden spoons from the Driftless Folk School Carving Circle and jewelry and gift items from Sue Blanchard will also be available. *(There is room for three more displays and any Friend member is welcome to participate at no charge. Contact Julie Hoel at juliehoel@icloud.com to register.)*

Local musicians will set a festive mood beginning at 2:00. Viroqua Bell Choir will ring in the afternoon. Band and choral performers from local high schools will follow. Viroqua's Whiskey Chicken will play old time music from 6:00-7:00. If you enjoy the sounds of the season, plan on relaxing for these varied musical acts. Complimentary coffee and cider will be available.

A **Soup and Salad** meal will be served from 5:00-7:00. Local soup chefs will contribute their culinary best for this event. The fee for dinner is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. **Driftless Stargazers** will also be on hand with telescope and binoculars to view the night sky. Weather permitting, planets, star clusters and constellations will be visible.

Buckets of Branches, beautifully handmade holiday décor, will be available for Silent Auction all day. Winners of the 2016 Photo Contest will be announced at 6:30.

Our membership table will be open all day for new and renewed memberships. Friends members will also receive a special 25% discount on any one item at the Gift Shop.

Following the Holiday Happening, we welcome the **String Ties** in concert beginning at 7:30; the fee is \$10.



2015 Holiday Happening Highlights Crafters Joanne Shird (top right) and Peg LaMartina (bottom right) display their wares; Viroqua Bell Choir (top inset) and Whiskey Chicken (above) perform

BOARD CANDIDATES

Presenting 2016 nominees for a three-year term on the Friends of the Reserve Board:



Sally Colacino moved to the Viola area about 30 years ago. Through the years she has watched the KVR grow into the incredible community resource it has become. She and her family spend a lot of time at the reserve enjoying the trails, hiking, biking, skiing and kayaking and attending the great programs offered. Sally has been a Friend of the Reserve for quite a few years, volunteering when she can and now feels its time to give back a bit more. She would like the opportunity to participate more by serving a term on the Friends board.



Liz Daines lives in the La Farge area. Liz grew up less than a mile from the Reserve, which was then referred to as the "Government Land", spending her time roaming the hills and camping along the Kickapoo. She witnessed the evolution of this area from what was a place where people would go to dump their garbage and misuse the land, to a mecca for environmental education and nature appreciation. Liz has served on the Friends Board for the last three years as both Vice President and now Secretary. This will be her second term.



Julie Hoel is a retired elementary school teacher who has lived in the Kickapoo Valley since 2008. Her days at YMCA camp as a child formed her character and made her a lifelong camper, canoeist and nature lover. Julie currently teaches part-time at KVR. Julie has been on the Friends Board for the last three years, and served for two as President. She wants to continue to encourage local participation at our beautiful Reserve. This will be her second term.

Gift Shop Needs YOU!

We are seeking committee members to help with the Friends' Gift Shop. Duties would include an hour long shift per month to dust, restock and reorganize the shelves. Committee members will also offer input on items to include in the shop. Contact Julie at juliehoel@icloud.com if you are interested.

There are Many Ways to be a Friend!

Friends Volunteer in the Gardens

(below) Kim Wahl; (top right) Joan Rolf and Becky Comeau; (bottom right) Louise Muller and Joan Kent



Tromp & Chomp registrations are taken by Friends volunteers

Weister Creek Restoration is enjoyed by Carrie Keith



Spring Fling 2016 Eric Lee flips burgers; Paul Hayes, Winston Ostrow and Mark Katz discuss trout fishing; raffle registration

2016 NEW MEMBERS

The Friends Board is happy to report a record high of 234 memberships in 2016!

We are pleased to know that so many people use and support the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, and hope for record renewals in 2017.

- Aaron, Kelly & Jacob Ament
- David & Susan Anderson
- Danny & Teresa Baker
- Pete & Catherine Beckstrand
- Wayne Blanchard & Judi May
- Jill Pyatt & Ryan Adams
- Bill Brooke
- Jeff Bye Family
- Isabela Castaneda
- Mark & Karen Chaney
- Fred Constalie
- Tim & Rae Ann Cooper
- Julie Melster & Michael Crawford
- Denise Doerr
- Danniel, Janna, Owen, Even Drier
- Eric Epstein
- Travis & Amy Forgues Family
- Raymond & Michele Fronczak
- Marlene Geary
- Donald Gore
- John Heasley
- Kevin Kihlslinger Family
- Jane Kouba
- La Farge Chiropractic & Nutrition
- Marjie & John La Favor
- Wanda Lewison
- Ann Lundeen Family
- Brenda Ludwig
- Kathleen Dunn & Tom McInerney
- Georgia Mommaerts
- Chis & Jodi Moxon Family
- T. Ostenson
- Cynthia Parr Family
- Gayle Poplauer
- Thea Puntney
- Doug & Mary Lou Quinn-Gruber
- Annake Ramsey
- Mary & Luc Readinger
- Susan Reed & Peter Schmidt
- Gregg Roberts
- Rose & Larry Ruby
- Anna Poplawska & Bill Scot
- Dean & Rebecca Seitz
- Nancy & PJ Sikorsky
- Kathleen E. M. Rynes & Hunter Volden
- Kelly Slentz
- John & Naomi Stennes-Spidahl
- Sharon & Jim Stroh
- Kathleen Sullivan & Robert Jackson
- Gordon Sussman
- Phil & Anita Tegan
- Becky Tomten
- Dan & Mary Thonesen
- Mary Webb
- Jeff White
- Ole Yttri
- Juanita Zimmerman