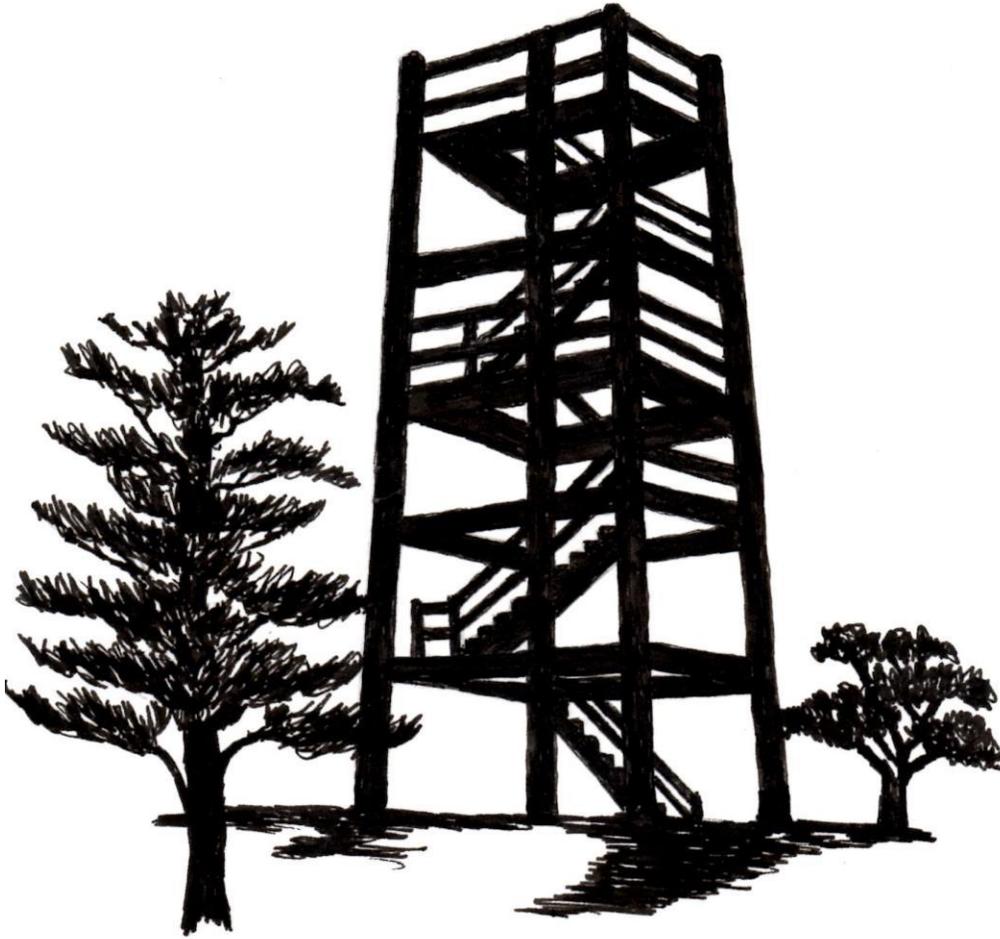


2021



FRIENDS OF LAPHAM
PEAK
ANNUAL REPORT

Lapham Peak Friends

PURPOSE

Lapham Peak Friends, incorporated in 1989, is a nonprofit organization whose purpose serves to promote and support the Lapham Peak Unit-Kettle Moraine State Forest.

ORGANIZATION

The Friends group is guided through a Board of Directors and coordinates its activities with the Park Manager. Some activities of the Friends group include sponsoring special events, assisting with projects at the property, and providing additional services to park visitors.

Membership is divided into six categories: Individual (1 vote), Family (2 votes), Senior (1 vote), Lifetime (1 vote), and Honorary and Corporate (no votes).

Meetings of the Lapham Peak Friends are held periodically with an annual meeting each November.

Donations to the Lapham Peak Friends and the Snowmaking Project are tax deductible.

We invite you to become a member of the Lapham Peak Friends and benefit from the recreational and educational opportunities at the park. Inquiries may be directed to

Lapham Peak Friends
W239 N846 County Hwy C
Delafield, WI 53018
Phone: 262-646-3025
Website: <http://www.laphampeakfriends.org/>

Board Members 2020-21

Year () indicates three year term expiration in November

Louise Borzynski (2022)

Anne Riendl (2023)

John Hillmer (2023)

Jon Jeffords (2022)

Rita Keber (2021)

Kris Maki (2022)

John McCarthy (2023)

Karl Timm (2021)

Rick Von Haden (2021)

Randy Wichinski (2021)

Dan Wiley (2023)

Colton Kelly, Lapham Peak Property Manager

Anne Korman, Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest
Superintendent

Treasurer Report Fiscal Year 2020-21

Our finances are strong. We have \$318,875 in total cash assets in a variety of dedicated accounts. In addition, the Lapham Peak Friends (LPF) is retaining ownership of the Piston Bully which had a value of \$250,000 at the time of purchase last year. Also, our endowment fund is \$65,424 which gives us a combined total of \$634,300 in assets.

Snowmaking had \$193,475 in donations and \$276,160 in expenses, the bulk of which was spent on the new snowcat and the Winter Recreation Storage Building. All our other traditional sources of revenue provided solid activity this year: general donations \$11,561, memberships \$3610, merchandise \$4651, habitat donations \$8719, memorial benches \$10,000, engraved bricks \$8315, endowment \$2153, along with strong merchandise sales of \$4651 (mostly Lapham Peak mugs). See more details in the attached spreadsheet.

The habitat, benches, bricks, butterfly garden, and snowmaking groups were active in enhancing the park with those funds. See individual reports for the details of those activities. In addition, a new shelter was built for the Ice Age Trail campsite.

Despite Covid, we were happy to be able to host a couple of fundraiser events this year. The Tuesday / Wednesday Ski Series and the Lapham Loppet together netted \$6,729 for Snowmaking. We were pleased to see the return of the Colorama which brought in thousands of dollars for the General Fund. (Technically the run itself occurred in the beginning of the 2021-22 fiscal year so the final balance is not on the attached spreadsheet.)

FRIENDS OF LAPHAM PEAK											
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES											
PERIOD OCTOBER 1, 2020 TO September 30, 2021											
	GENERAL	SKI SERIES & LOPPET 2021	Colorama 2021	Fright Hike 2021	Knowles 2019	Trail Enh. Grant 2018	Incentive Grant	Lodge	Nature Center	SNOWMAKING PROJECT	TOTAL
BEGINNING BALANCE	148,720.64	0.00	0.00	-1,000.00	2,500.00	-2,300.89	0.00	0.00	54,877.16	180,816.84	383,613.75
RECEIPTS											
DONATIONS	11,560.67	115.00	25.00							193,475.42	205,176.09
MEMBERSHIP FEES	3,610.00										3,610.00
INTEREST	44.07										44.07
BEVERAGE/FOOD SALES											0.00
DNR/OTHER GRANTS					2,500.00		9,414.00				11,914.00
NATURE CENTER GIFT STORE											0.00
ENTRY FEES / ADMISSIONS		6,905.90	3,577.40								10,483.30
MERCHANDISE/MISC SALES	4,651.20										4,651.20
VENDOR FEES											0.00
SPONSORSHIPS			1,750.00								1,750.00
DRAW FROM REVOLVING LINE OF CREDIT											0.00
LPF BROKERAGE ACCOUNT											0.00
HABITAT RESTORATION FUND	8,719.20										8,719.20
BUTTERFLY GARDEN FUND	0.00										0.00
HOMESTEAD SHELTER FUND											0.00
JARECKI PRAIRIE FUND											0.00
MEMORIAL BENCH FUND	10,000.00										10,000.00
ENGRAVED BRICKS FUND	8,315.00										8,315.00
LPF ENDOWMENT FUND	2,153.00										2,153.00
MISCELLANEOUS											0.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	49,053.14	7,020.90	5,352.40	0.00	2,500.00	0.00	9,414.00	0.00	0.00	193,475.42	266,815.86
DISBURSEMENTS											
SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT	1,216.58	15.75	2,136.76			362.00	9,203.01	6.48		262,212.76	275,153.34
CONTRACTED SERVICES	4,905.40		250.00		5,000.00	650.00				9,956.46	20,761.86
POSTAGE	114.25										114.25
PRINTING	492.84		23.09			48.15				881.08	1,445.16
BANK CHARGES										140.00	140.00
RACEWIRE FEES		8.00	1.25								9.25
PAYPAL ACCOUNT FEES	111.33									524.99	636.32
FILINGS	164.00										164.00
INSURANCE	1,756.68									1,957.25	3,713.93
BEVERAGE/FOOD											0.00
AWARDS & BANQUETS		267.87									267.87
MERCHANDISE/MISC SALES	7,715.79										7,715.79
FUNDRAISING										417.90	417.90
ELECTRONIC PRESENCE	70.00			70.00						70.00	210.00
RTP-TRAIL GRANT											0.00
BUTTERFLY GARDEN FUND	947.98										947.98
DAN & MELLISA JARECKI PRAIRE REST. FUND											0.00
HABITAT RESTORATION FUND	7,541.10										7,541.10
MEMORIAL BENCH FUND	2,051.82										2,051.82
ENGRAVED BRICKS FUND	2,463.68										2,463.68
LPF ENDOWMENT FUND	8,757.47										8,757.47
MISCELLANEOUS	300.00							0.02			300.02
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	38,608.92	291.62	2,411.10	70.00	5,000.00	1,060.15	9,203.01	6.50	0.00	276,160.44	332,811.74
NET INCOME (fiscal 2020-21)	10,444.22	6,729.28	2,941.30	-70.00	-2,500.00	-1,060.15	210.99	-6.50	0.00	-82,685.02	-65,995.88
TRANSFER (fiscal 2020-21)		-6,729.28							1,257.56	6,729.28	1,257.56
LOAN -- REVOLVING LINE OF CREDIT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
ENDING BALANCE	159,164.86	0.00	2,941.30	-1,070.00	0.00	-3,361.04	210.99	-6.50	56,134.72	104,861.10	318,875.43

FRIENDS OF LAPHAM PEAK		
STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND FUTURE OBLIGATIONS		
2021		September
CASH		
WAUKESHA ST BANK	- SAVINGS	\$30,540.30
SUMMIT UNION	- CD	\$51,257.56
WAUKESHA STATE BANK	- CHECKING	\$237,077.57
TOTAL CASH		\$318,875.43
OTHER ASSETS		
VANGUARD ENDOWMENT FUND		\$65,424.15
Piston Bully		\$250,000.00
TOTAL OTHER ASSETS		\$315,424.15
TOTAL ASSETS		\$634,299.58
DEDICATED FUNDS		
SNOWMAKING (SM)		\$104,861.10
NATURE CENTER (NC)		\$56,134.72
TOTAL DEDICATED FUNDS		\$160,995.82
FUTURE OBLIGATIONS		
MEMORIAL BENCH FUND		\$62,353.29
ENGRAVED BRICKS FUND		\$12,411.60
BUTTERFLY GARDEN FUND		-\$211.95
HABITAT RESTORATION FUND		\$11,648.74
DAN & MELLISA JARECKI PRAIRE RESTORATION FUND		\$516.68
ENDOWMENT NOT YET TRANSFERRED		\$0.00
TOTAL FUTURE OBLIGATIONS		\$86,718.36
TOTAL LIABILITIES		\$0.00
NET WORTH (TOTAL ASSETS MINUS LIABILITIES)		\$634,299.58
AVAILABLE DISCRETIONARY GENERAL FUNDS (GF)		
EQUALS : Total Cash Minus Total Dedicated Funds Minus Total Future Obligations		\$71,161.25

2021 Bluebirds at Lapham Peak

For many years, bird boxes have been set up and monitored at Lapham Peak to help in the effort to restore the Bluebird population. The bluebird populations suffered due to an early and unusual spring snow storm in Texas. Many birds died from the extended freezing temperatures during their migration. As a result, there were fewer birds nesting and producing young. About 60 bluebirds fledged from the boxes at Lapham Peak this year. While the numbers were down substantially from other years, nesting activity was observed later into the season than usual. Tree Swallows, and Chickadees also used the boxes for nesting and raising their young. Thanks to Sandy Street, Karen DeBoer, and Mike Fort who provided the regular monitoring and reporting necessary for successfully managing the Bluebird trails at the park.

2021 Garden Brick Pathway Butterfly Garden

The Friends added 54 engraved brick orders to the garden pathway for our fiscal year ending September 2021. A profit of \$6,950 was added to the brick fund in the Friends general account. Plans to complete the final phase of the garden pathway was planned for the Fall of 2021 but were delayed until the Spring of 2022. Thanks to everyone who support the Friends of Lapham Peak and donated a brick.

Butterfly Garden Report 2021



Before



After

2021 saw the first major renovation of the garden and its surrounding area since its inception in 1992.

It began with the removal of the entire area of tall prairie grass, which covered an estimated 20% of the garden. In its place, dozens of transplants were installed and limestone pathways added. As the summer progressed, more areas were cleared of grass and weeds in preparation for the addition of new plants next season, and more limestone paths were placed. Two bird baths were added for our feathered friends and, of course, the butterflies.

Numerous Hosta plants were placed in the shady areas just inside the old metal garden gate. Outside the garden perimeter, a large area was cleared, a woodchip surface was installed, and a picnic table was added to provide a relaxing area for families to rest and enjoy the garden.

The brick pathway will be extended this coming spring. Next season we will be planting numerous prairie plants to fill in the garden. As always, donations of time and/or money to the garden are welcome!

Lapham Peak Endowment Fund 2021

In 2010, the Friends of Lapham Peak (Friends), a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, established an Endowment Fund. Establishing an endowment fund was the first step in providing long term funding for the many needs and programs at the Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest, Lapham Peak Unit that are not funded by the State of Wisconsin.

The Endowment Fund is a means for individuals to donate to this very special place with the annual earnings (interest and dividends) used to support the Park. The earnings may be used to help fund a variety of items, including development and preservation of the nature center and the beautiful natural resources of the Park, invasive species control, wildlife management, school programs, cross country skiing, prairie and blue bird restoration, etc.

The current balance of our Endowment Fund is: \$65,054.(9/30/2021)

If you would like to make a donation to the Friends, it may be made in any of the following ways:

- 1) **Gift to the “Friends of Lapham Peak”**, by cash, check, or contribution of other assets, to be used for general purposes of the Friends in support of the Park. A specific purpose may be designated. Contributions should be sent to :
Friends of Lapham Peak, c/o President.
W329 N846 Hwy C
Delafield, WI 53018
- 2) **Gift to the Endowment Fund** make checks payable to “**Vanguard**” and state in the memo section: Lapham Peak Endowment Fund.
- 3) **3) Estate planning designation.** Either the Friends of Lapham Peak or the Lapham Peak Endowment Fund: may be designated as a beneficiary under the donor’s estate plan. This type of gift is a chance to support the Park and provide a legacy for the donor. It may be the easiest way to give and have the least impact on your current lifestyle. Estate plan gifts have the potential to have the greatest impact and are strongly encouraged. Your contributions to either the Friends of Lapham Peak or the Friends of Lapham Peak Endowment Fund may be deductible according to current tax law; however, this determination should be made in consultation with your tax advisor. Current tax law also has advantages to donors who are eligible to fund IRA accounts, which effectively waives income taxes on these contributions.

If you have questions, please contact Rick Von Haden, Friends of Lapham Peak spokesperson (262-646-4178), or email the Lapham Peak Board of Directors at rkeber@milwpc.com.

Habitat Restoration

October 2020 – September 2021

Four teams focused on various areas within the Park, all working on the overall effort to manage invasive species of plants and trees while restoring habitats back to their native states. These include woodlands, wetlands, prairies, and oak savannahs. Our teams were led by:

Holly Schmaling:

Holly continues to work year-round, utilizing volunteers when appropriate. The winter focus is cutting woody invasives such as buckthorn and honeysuckle; spring shifts the focus to garlic mustard; summer work includes battling wild parsnip and Japanese hedge parsley; and fall has her follow-up herbiciding the resprouts and seedlings of the woody invasives from prior work sites before jumping back into the winter cutting season again. Fall also finds her collecting seeds and dispersing seed on previously cleared sites with volunteers. With the re-introduction of native species suppressed by invasives being the essence of restoration, this is a great full-circle teaching opportunity. A nice example of this happened in the winter of 2019 when Kettle Moraine High School students helped clear a large area of buckthorn off the Ice Age Trail west of the tower, and the following fall the students were able to collect native woodland seed from other areas of the Park and distributed that seed onto the cleared area.

Over **238** hours were logged working on all of these efforts.

Dan Jarecki:

Dan has been focusing on Prairie Restoration work north of the Hausmann Nature Center, with several units now well under development while others are just getting started. Last fall, about ½ of this Prairie was burned under contract at the same time other units in the Park were being worked on. This past year, Dan also had natural resource professionals come out three times to spray the Prairie as he continued to work on maintenance and development – working to provide plants that would provide color and habitat in the spring, summer, and fall. And, when invasives or non-native plants would pop up, he was out there removing them!

Recently, Dan and Melissa Jarecki funded repaving the entire length of the Planation Trail – from Homestead Hollow through and around the Prairie that he's been restoring, and all the way that the trail goes – 1.8 miles when you walk the full length! Many thanks to Dan and Melissa for this gift!

Mike Neimon:

Mike leads our weekend groups and has focused on the east-most side of the Park from the far north end of the pond near the subdivision there, to the south. In 2021, they were able to do about 3 football fields worth of removal. The primary focus was to remove the buckthorn and honeysuckle that had engulfed the pond and surrounding areas. They were able to remove about 50% around the pond which has allowed Park visitors to see some of it from the main path which in turn has encouraged many visitors to go and view it as well. The goal is to work the other 50% of the shoreline creating a larger viewable access for visitors walking by. The work group consists of a mix of adults and periodically Scout Troops looking for conservation/volunteer hours. Over **650** hours were put in this past fiscal year, and for an additional measure, they burned over **220** piles of brush.



One of the other efforts that Mike, and his family got involved with was the clearing of invasives from a few acres of woods at Kettle Moraine High School, next to the parking lots. Mike had a few of us others come and help one day as a way that we could help with good community relations, and a way to give back to the school as the school provides a number of volunteers to us for our efforts. Those woods look really nice now!

On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday – Jack and John with a crew ranging from 4-12 each day, worked year-round on a number of project areas. Over **3,922** hours were logged this past physical year by 35 different volunteers, up from 2,100 hours in 2020. This group burned over **615** piles of buckthorn, honeysuckle, black walnut, box elder, prickly ash, black locust, and deadfall this past year, up from 225 piles in 2020.

A year ago, John Kolbe joined our team, and he not only volunteers every day, but he became our expert chain sharpener, which saved us \$2,000-3,000 this past year in chainsaw maintenance expenses!

We focus on highly visible areas, such as along Highway C, south of the ponds where the Ice Age Trail crosses Hwy C, making it easier to see into the Park, see the ponds, and avoid deer hits! We also worked all summer in the heat clearing the woods around the Hausmann Nature Center getting 8 acres ready for a fall woodland burn (or next spring). And, we have 13 Prairie units (51 acres) on the west and east sides of the Park planned for a 2021 fall burn. The burn will include Timm’s Woods and what we call, Garlic Mustard Hill (just north of Lillian Ct., where the Ice Age Trail and the Prairie Path loop around). On the east side, Prairies east and south of the Butterfly Garden will be burned. Other 2021 project areas included clearing large buckthorn trees from Nemahbin Springs, helping with last fall’s and this past spring’s Prairie burns (120 acres total – which requires us to be firefighter certified), and clearing buckthorn, honeysuckle and autumn olive from trails and our Campsite.

Each year, the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks ask the public to vote on various categories. In 2021, Lapham Peak was voted **Best State Park System Property to take a Sunrise Hike**. We think our quiet woods and wild-life contribute to this, and also our beautiful prairies and Butterfly Garden.

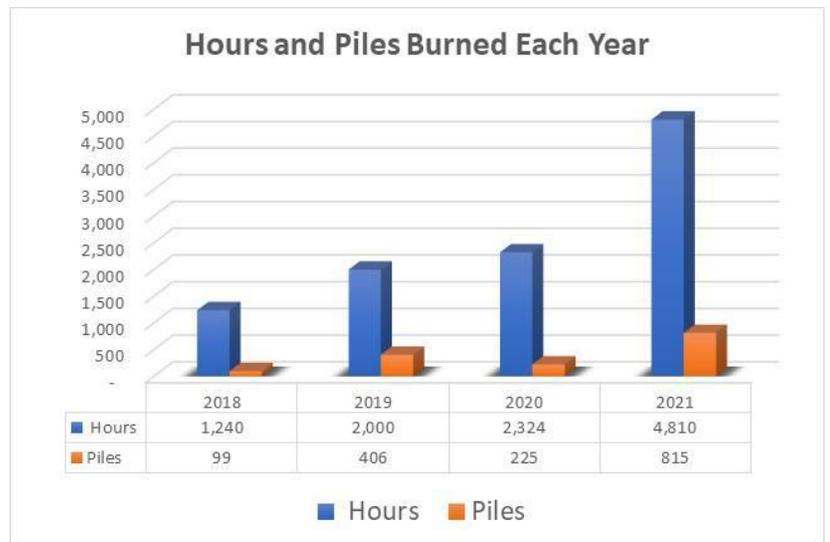


Other work that we got involved with this year included making 20 memorial benches for our Park, helping to construct a new Campsite Shelter (photo above), and assisting the Rangers with some of their projects.

A summary of our total progress with hours volunteered and invasive “weed trees” burned is visualized well in this chart. We’d love to have you get involved volunteering with us (no tools or training needed) or help us by funding some of this work! ALL this work is donation based (the contracted prairie burns, contracted woodland burns, equipment purchases, herbicide purchases, UTV maintenance and tires, occasional repairs, and tools).

To get involved, please see our site: laphampeakfriends.org/habitat-restoration

To make a donation, please go to: laphampeakfriends.org/donate



2021 Ski Series, Including Loppet

Due to covid-19 restrictions, the organizers of the 2021 Ski Series were required to limit the participation of the ski league in the following ways:

Three different mini-leagues were formed to hold events at three different times.

Jim Marschalek headed the Tuesday Time Trial Ski League from 2 to 6:30 with his newly purchased timing system. 32 skiers enjoyed the afternoon event. Thanks to Jim for a job well done....and he's coming back for 2022!

The Peak Nordic and other High School and Middle School students held their events separately each Wednesday from 5 to 6:30. Students enjoyed the earlier time so they could get home earlier to finish homework, etc.

The Wednesday Night Ski League was allowed to have 46 participants and 4 volunteers. We held all 7 events and awarded medals on the final night. The indoor shelters were closed; therefore, no banquet was held this year.

In addition, all registration fees were collected online through RaceWire.com, preventing the spread of the virus through money handling. Ariens gratefully supplied new bibs that were given to the skiers Wednesday night to keep for the series, another safety measure. Thanks to Jon Jeffords for arranging for the donation.

Finally, the Lapham Loppet was not able to be held normally as there would be too many participants at the event; therefore, a Virtual Loppet was held, giving participants a time frame in which to submit their own self time. 54 virtual Loppet skiers submitted their time and contributed to the park amenities with their donation.

Even in a strange year of restrictions and need for flexibility, skiers and volunteers worked well to make a successful season providing \$6729.28 to snowmaking.

Thanks to the volunteers and coaches for a job well done!

Gratefully, Kris Maki, Board member and Ski League organizer

**Friends of Lapham Peak
Annual Meeting**

REPORT ON SNOWMAKING – 2020-2021

By: John McCarthy

The 2020-2021 season was the 16th for snowmaking at Lapham Peak. The completion of the Winter Recreation Storage Building (WRSB) and the arrival of the new Pisten Bully 100 snowcat ushered in a new era of snowmaking at the park.

Snowmaking Operations – 2020-2021 Ski Season

Snowmaking operations began on December 13th, when the weather finally got cold enough. After three days of snowmaking, the Pisten Bully was brought out for the first time to level the 'whales'. The first segment of the trail was opened to skiing on December 17th - four days after starting snowmaking operations. A second round of snowmaking occurred over the Christmas holidays, with volunteer snowmakers finishing the remainder of the snowmaking trails. The Pisten Bully was used to level the new whales, and all the manmade snow loops were open for skiing on December 27th. The last day of grooming was March 9th, resulting in 83 days of grooming the manmade snow.

The Pisten Bully was also used to groom the balance of the lighted loop when sufficient natural snow was present. The season highlight was the use of the Lapham Peak ski trails as a site for virtual Birkie events in late February, with the Pisten Bully grooming the snowmaking trails and the lighted loop for Birkie skiers.

Snowmaking System Improvements

The new Pisten Bully 100F includes a plow blade to spread the manmade snow, a tiller for breaking up the ice, and two track setters for classic skiing tracks. It was operated by trained volunteers Keith "Beattle" Adelmeyer and Mark Janis. The machine was used to spread the manmade snow whales, and to regularly groom the snowmaking trails. It was used to set a double set of striding tracks, the likes of which have never been seen before at Lapham Peak.

The Pisten Bully is owned by the Friends of Lapham Peak. It cost \$250,000 and was paid for by donations to the Friends. The old snowcat was sold to Nubs Nob Ski Area in Michigan; and the DNR plans to use the proceeds to pay a portion of the cost of a new gator for their regular grooming operations.



The WRSB was completed just in time for delivery of the Piston Bully. The construction of the WRSB was directed by Rich Marusinec, supported by Keith “Beattle” Adelmeyer. Building construction was performed by Steve Joda Construction, with the assistance of many volunteers. Several major amenities for the building that were not included in the original project were added, including insulation, interior walls and ceiling, propane heat, garage door openers, and an internal security system. The final cost for the building was around \$80,000, which includes the value of many items donated to the project, including heaters, bollards, electrical components, mandoor, excavating equipment, windows, and the holding tank. That final cost does not include the value of the hundreds of hours of labor donated by the over 30 volunteers who helped to complete the project.

The WRSB is used for year-round storage of the Piston Bully, the snowguns, and other equipment related to winter operations at the park. The building protects the equipment from damage due to sun, weather, and rodents; and provide a location for staging snowmaking operations and maintaining equipment.



2021 Colorama Run/Walk

After a year of no Colorama event allowed due to Covid 19 restrictions, the 32nd event was held on October 2, 2021 at Homestead Hollow. Jon and Christine Jeffords, newly accepting the challenge of race director, with the mentoring and aid of Kris Maki and a great team of volunteers and rangers pulled off another successful event.

217 runners and walkers enjoyed a lovely October day with newly designed custom t-shirts and great free drawing prizes. Our loyal sponsors provided funding for the t-shirts and, in addition, leftover t-shirts were available for sale at the run and the following weekend. To date, \$430 in t-shirts sales added to donations of \$241, sponsor support of \$1750 and registrations totaling \$7471 made this a successful event. Expenses will be deducted from the total income.

Alas, Smokey Bear did not make an appearance this year, nor were the Friends homemade treats and Smokey Bear birthday cake available. Let us hope 2022 can offer a return to the event all are accustomed to.

Respectfully submitted, Kris Maki

Friends of Lapham Peak

2021 Annual Meeting

FUTURE LODGE AT LAPHAM PEAK

The Friends of Lapham Peak have begun planning for a new lodge facility at the Evergreen Grove trailhead at Lapham Peak. The DNR has been carrying a potential project to expand or replace the existing Evergreen Shelter building on its Capital Development list for years, due to the age and inadequate capacity of the existing building. A generous pledge of \$500,000 by several supporters of the park has allowed the Friends to jump-start the process for development of a new building at the Evergreen Grove trailhead.

The proposed lodge would be about 5000 square feet, located between the parking lot and the trail. It will include a large “gathering area”, bathrooms, changing rooms, and a multi-purpose room. The building would serve visitors to the park year-round, and would be reservable during select time periods for meetings and special events through the DNR’s existing reservation system.

The Friends’ building committee has held meetings with many user groups to get input on the potential size, location, and features of the future lodge. A “Business Plan” for the project was prepared by the committee and submitted to DNR. The DNR approved the initiation of fundraising for the project on October 6th via a letter of support from Parks Bureau Director Steve Schmelzer. The Business Plan identifies a fundraising goal of about \$1.3 Million, with construction of the new Lodge in 2023.



Lapham Lodge conceptual rendering by Scott Ackatz

2021 Park Manager Report

Lapham Peak rang in the New Year with picture perfect ski conditions paired with the highest visitation that the park has ever recorded, totaling over 84,000 visitors in January. The countless volunteer hours contributed to making man-made snow and grooming with the brand new Pisten Bully 100 paid off in a big way. I was told by several park visitors, staff, and volunteers that this was the best skiing conditions that they had ever experienced. Skiers were able to ski on our trails for over 100 days straight.

We were all pleasantly surprised to hear of the exciting donation proposal the Keber's to fast-track the construction of a brand new building at the Evergreen trailhead. The planning team that was formed did a wonderful job gathering input from the different user groups that will ultimately benefit from this gathering space. We are all very excited to continue planning, fundraising, and eventually make this building a reality.

As the snow melted it was time to carry out the long awaited prescribed burn throughout the Prairie on the West side of the park. This was another great success story between volunteers, park staff, and contractor. An impressive 70 acres of prairie was burned in total. I am very pleased with how this partnership has developed and am excited to see this continue for years to come. This process gave visitors the opportunity to see the benefits of prescribed burning first-hand as the prairie's wildflowers became significantly more abundant than the previous year.

Over the summer we were also lucky enough to have two Eagle Scout projects completed on the property. The first provided us an impressive new kiosk at the Evergreen trailhead to provide information about the property, special events, and friends group. The second project addressed an eroding hillside along our mountain bike trail. This project funded and installed a soil stabilizer called geocell which was then filled in with a combination of crushed limestone, topsoil, and grass seed. This method of erosion control will be monitored and may be used in other areas of the park that have erosion issues.

The landscape at Lapham Peak underwent a significant change as our scheduled logging operation was carried out throughout the several pine plantations. This was done to promote the health of the larger trees to ensure that they had enough nutrients and water. This was coordinated in conjunction with the plan to repave the Plantation Path. This repaving project was made possible by a very generous donation from the Jarecki's. This path is one of our most visited trails, due to its accessibility and variety of views.

Considering the increase in visitation, this donation could not have come at a better time. To add even more appeal to this area, the Butterfly Garden was given a makeover by a couple of very dedicated volunteers. Dozens of new plants were planted, new limestone paths were created, woodchips were added, and much more.

The Friends of Lapham Peak were awarded the Incentive Grant, from the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks to improve our Ice Age Trail Campsite. The focus of this project was to construct a shelter for campers to have relief from inclement weather and to continue with the prairie restoration efforts that surround the campsite. This was another joint effort between our “Buckthorn Busters” crew, Ice Age Trail volunteers, and park staff. This 14’X18’ shelter was constructed very quickly and everyone had a great time pitching in. This is an excellent addition to the area and was immediately utilized by campers. The 5 acres surrounding the site is scheduled to be seeded with prairie grasses in the spring and followed up with a prescribed burn.

There are several exciting things still scheduled for the end of this eventful year. We are awaiting final approval to carry out the prescribed burns scheduled at the end of November that will address some high priority prairie and woodland units. The Friends of Lapham Peak have agreed to purchase a Salt Brine Boom sprayer which we will utilize this winter. This will make our park roads and accessible trail much safer while also being more environmentally friendly.

Despite the many challenges we faced throughout the year, with the incredible support from the community, we were able to make improvements throughout the entire park. I feel so fortunate to be the Park Manager of this property and to be able to work amongst so many passionate individuals that make these accomplishments possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

Colton Kelly

Park Manager

2021 Superintendents Report

As I sit and gather my thoughts for this report, I cannot help but reflect on the contrast in how 2021 started vs. how it's drawing to a close. A year ago, our buildings were closed to the public, and we were finishing up construction on the new Winter Recreation Storage Building, in anticipation of the arrival of the new Pisten Bully. The day it arrived was sunny and bright, and we were all full of joy thinking ahead to how it would change the winter season that was only a few weeks away. The season arrived, and was snowy and cold – a skiers dream. The newly constructed stone fire-ring was much appreciated by park visitors, and there were many days where the laughter and conversations around the fire sparked new friendships and sustained established ones.

In spring, the state allowed us to have volunteers return and work in small groups outside, even though our buildings stayed closed until June. The Lapham “regulars” didn't hesitate to get right back into the swing of things and start working on trail maintenance as soon as the weather cooperated. Not soon after, the Keber's contacted me and asked for a meeting to discuss a “new project”. In a short time, I was working behind the scenes on the “next big thing” for Lapham Peak – a plan for a new indoor gathering space to replace our much-loved but too small Evergreen shelter. My excitement was hard to keep under wraps, and I'm glad I didn't have to hide it for long because trying to keep such a generous donation and the planned use for it under wraps wasn't something that was easy to do. As we worked to formulate our game plan for the new “Lapham Lodge”, there was much to do before we took the idea to the folks who would ultimately give us the support we needed to make the dream a reality. A planning team was created, many gatherings seeking input were held, and a concept drawing materialized.

True to form at Lapham, we had many irons in the fire during 2021. While planning for a new space was exciting, we also had other great projects to focus on and complete. The group had received grant funding to construct a new shelter along the Ice Age Trail, and Colton worked diligently to create a building plan, source materials, and put together a crew of volunteers to construct it. Once all the materials were in hand, the project became a

reality, and in the course of a few weeks, Ice Age Trail hikers who stayed at Lapham went from a nice grassy patch, to an enclosed shelter where they could seek shelter from the weather if needed. During construction, hikers staying at the site were amazed and very happy to see the new shelter going up. The very day it was completed, there was a reservation, and in the last few weeks, it has been used by several happy hikers.

Lapham Peak also had its first timber harvest in 10 years this year. Two areas were marked for sale, and the work began to mow out invasive species to make way for the logging equipment. A separate, but linked project to re-pave the Plantation Path was being planned, thanks to a generous donation from the Jurecki's. Careful scheduling allowed the timber to be harvested and skidded out of the area, prior to the paving. As soon as the harvest was complete, the work on the path began, and by peak fall color, the area was transformed and the hikers returned to a beautiful new path. The loggers moved over to the area behind Summer Stage, and all work in that area was completed by mid-October, giving us plenty of time to put finishing touches on the trails before the snow arrives in a few more weeks.

If you were one of the many volunteers who helped on these projects (and more!) this year at Lapham Peak, THANK YOU. We could not accomplish this work without your help. The visitation at Wisconsin State Parks and Forests is setting records, and predictions are showing we will likely see overall increases of ~20% again this year across the system. The new visitors who found us in the pandemic are becoming "regulars" who we hope will continue to come back and join us as members of the Friends group or helpers on volunteer work days.

Another year may be ending, but the year ahead looks as promising and as exciting as any I've had in my time as Superintendent. I can't wait to see what 2022 has in store for Lapham Peak, and I look forward to you all being a part of it with me!

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Korman
Superintendent