



Foundation for Dane County Parks  
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[foundationfordanecountyparks.org](http://foundationfordanecountyparks.org)

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Thank you to the Mad City Dream Homes real estate team for underwriting and producing this newsletter. We truly appreciate your generosity and support.



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## IN THIS ISSUE:

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**Ho-Chunk  
Nation Youth  
Programming**



**2022 Grant  
Applications  
Open**



**Centro Hispano  
Junior Naturalist  
Session**





## President's Message

The Foundation has grown dramatically and faster than we expected. Our successes have brought more challenges to our Board of Directors and limited staff. We have also had to say goodbye, after two years, to our amazing part-time Foundation Coordinator, Elisa Guerrero. She is pursuing a master's degree in sustainability at Tufts University in Boston. We wish her every success. In order to meet those current challenges and build a viable organization for the future we have decided to hire a full-time Executive Director.

This is a big step and one we approach with a sober resolve. The position will be independent from the County, but we are grateful that the County Parks will assist with office space, internet, etc., which represents a considerable financial savings. We hope to have the position filled by October 1st. The position description is posted on our website and will remain open until we receive an accepted offer. If you have ideas of candidate names please send them to us at [foundationfordanecountyparks@gmail.com](mailto:foundationfordanecountyparks@gmail.com) and share the position description widely.

Again I wish to thank Dan Miller and the Mad City Dream Homes staff for their ongoing generous support of our Foundation by providing our newsletters and other support.

Applications for the Executive Director position will be reviewed as received with the goal of identifying an outstanding candidate before September 15, 2022.

The application can be found at:  
[foundationfordanecountyparks.org/careers/executive-director](http://foundationfordanecountyparks.org/careers/executive-director)

## Ho-Chunk Nation Youth Programming

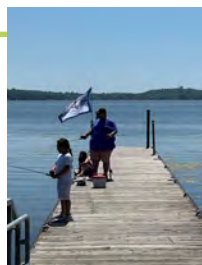
Funded by a grant from the Foundation, The Friends of Capital Springs Recreation Area (FOCSRA) hosted Ho-Chunk Nation youth for a week of outdoor and cultural activities at William G. Lunney Lake Farm County Park in June. The Park and surrounding Capital Springs Recreation Area is the ancestral homeland of the Ho-Chunk Nation (HCN).

The HCN youth group is led by Shelley Thundercloud, who coordinated cultural activities for the week. Clare Carlson is the naturalist for FOCSRA, who coordinated outdoor park activities. Youth spent time learning about prairies and observed wildlife like turtles, deer, and many birds such as blue herons. Youth used binoculars to view birds and look out across Lake Waubesa from the Lower Yahara River Trail boardwalk. Youth also discussed traditional Ho-Chunk uses of plants found at the Park (signs are made courtesy of the grant), participated in HCN traditional games, canoed on Lake Waubesa, and caught fish.

In addition, FOCSRA along with Dane County Parks and other partners welcomed the HCN historic dug-out canoe journey through the four lakes and down the Yahara River. The welcome event on June 21st included the HCN youth. The canoe was made from a cottonwood tree harvested from Lunney Lake Farm Park. County Executive Joe Parisi, Foundation President Bill Lunney, along with others welcomed the paddlers accompanied by drummers from the Madtown Singers. Ancestral food was catered by Wild Bearies of Tomah. It was a memorable event.



Photo credits: Judie Pfeifer, Clare Carlson, and Joe Parisi





# Board Member Announcements

The Foundation welcomed two new board members this spring who will bring a wealth of experience and insight to our work:



**Tom Wilson** served as the Attorney/Administrator for the Town of Westport, located along the north shore of Lake Mendota, from 1999 until his retirement in April 2022. He previously practiced law with the Stafford Law Firm specializing in local government.

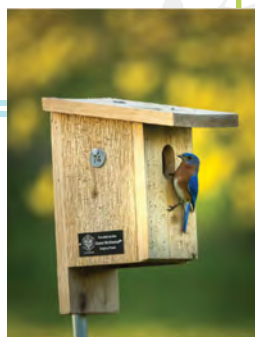
Tom has served and continues to serve on several local, regional, and state boards and commissions, including the Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District Commission, the Executive Committee of Yahara WINS, and the Clean Lakes Alliance Community Board. Tom received both his Bachelor of Arts and law degrees from UW-Madison.

**Dan Erdman** has served in leadership positions on numerous nonprofit boards, including Groundswell Conservancy and Chair of the Board of the Wisconsin Nature Conservancy.

Dan owns Prairie Cafe and Bakery in Middleton Hills and has been involved in developing environmentally friendly commercial real estate in the southern Wisconsin area. Dan has a Bachelor of Arts degree from UW-Madison and a master's degree in architecture from the University of Illinois in Champaign.



## 2022 Grant Applications Open



The Foundation is pleased to announce its fourth year of grant funding for projects that promote education, interpretation, and volunteerism within Dane County Parks. Friends Groups, partner organizations, community centers, and any other groups conducting projects on Dane County Parks land are encouraged to apply.

- Projects must address education, interpretation, or volunteerism within the parks.
- Grant requests can be up to \$2,000.
- Applications are due October 17th, 2022 and must be submitted to [foundationfordanecountyparks@gmail.com](mailto:foundationfordanecountyparks@gmail.com)
- Download the application at [foundationfordanecountyparks.com/grants](https://foundationfordanecountyparks.com/grants)

Supporting the work of Friends Groups and other volunteers is a core part of the Foundation's work. Previously funded projects include interpretive signage, equipment purchases for trail and community garden maintenance, and a variety of educational campaigns. We can't wait to see what project proposals are submitted this year!

*2021 Prairie Moraine Friends Bluebirds Project. Photos courtesy of Steve Dahlgren and Jay Brooks.*

## Foundation Supporter Spotlight: Roe Parker

### Foundation Grants Feed People

As the President of Anderson Park Friends, Inc. (APF), I've seen firsthand how impactful Foundation grants have been for our organization's efforts to help members of our community. We are growing vegetables in our quarter-acre garden at the Anderson Farm Center in Oregon to feed hungry families, seniors, and children in southern Dane County. Fresh produce is expensive in grocery stores and is beyond the budgets of many people, and food pantries are limited by the small amounts of fresh produce and only on an ad hoc basis.

The food pantry garden utilizes only volunteers to plant, maintain, and harvest the garden. Two Foundation grants made a dramatic difference in our operations by funding a new Troy-Bilt rototiller (2021) and partially



# Centro Hispano Junior Naturalist Session

The Foundation is again supporting the Junior Naturalist Program at the Lussier Family Heritage Center as a way to introduce more youth to nature through the Dane County Parks.

After a successful pilot program during summer 2021, the Junior Naturalist education program is back in full swing this summer! The Foundation secured a grant from American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation to fund the program last year, and with another generous donation from the Dreams Foundation in 2022, a special session of Junior Naturalist is being hosted for youth from Centro Hispano.

Staff from the Lussier Family Heritage Center built upon their relationship with Centro Hispano to offer this special session. Throughout July, a group of 25 students explored various Dane County Parks, learned about plant and wildlife identification, and participated in other hands-on conservation experiences. The program aims to teach participants about their local ecosystems, familiarize them with Dane County Parks, and teach them about careers in conservation. By offering a session specifically for youth from Centro Hispano, Dane County Parks and the Foundation hope to dismantle barriers that can impede access to parks and careers in conservation for people of color. Thanks to the funding secured by the Foundation, all program costs were covered for Centro Hispano participants.

To mark the conclusion of the session, the Healthy Parks Healthy You partnership hosted a celebration for participants and their families with dinner and fun activities at Lunney Lake Farm Park. The event was designed to celebrate the accomplishment of all the Centro Hispano youth and provide an opportunity for family members to enjoy the parks as well.

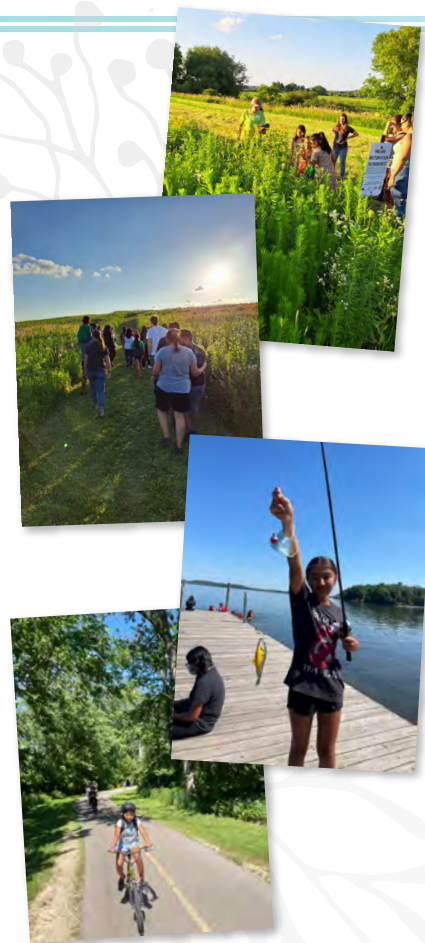


Photo credits:  
Dane County Parks  
and Jenni Beekman

## Parks Director Update



We are thrilled that **Joleen Stinson**, who succeeded Darren Marsh in an interim role in 2021, has recently been hired as the Dane County Parks Director. Joleen serves as ex-officio on the Foundation's Board and is the liaison between Dane County Parks and the Foundation. Joleen grew up on the west side of Dane County and has been recreating in Dane County Parks her whole life. Joleen started volunteering with one of the Friends groups as a high school student. She graduated from UW-Stevens Point with a degree in natural resources management and environmental education in 2006. Most of Joleen's career has been in Parks, Recreation and Forestry in smaller municipalities in Dane County, including the City of Sun Prairie and Villages of DeForest and Waunakee. In 2020, she was chosen as the Outstanding Park Professional of the year by the Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association. The award recognizes park professionals who show outstanding leadership and dedication to their communities and the park industry.

funding a new irrigation system to provide water to 12 acres of land (2022). The equipment increases the amount of food we can grow and leverages our volunteers' talents and time by decreasing the need for manual labor in the garden. The irrigation system installed in early July 2022 has enabled us to harvest vegetables during July's recent heat wave. Last year we didn't have the system and lost about 300 pounds of broccoli because of high heat and drought.

This year's goal is to raise over 3,000 pounds of fresh vegetables. Onions, zucchini, kohlrabi, and broccoli have already been harvested. The August-September harvest will consist of green beans, 3 kinds of squash, peppers, cabbage, and sweet corn. Research shows these are the most requested vegetables by pantry participants. New varieties are experimented with each year to learn if they are a better match for the soil and are resistant to insects and disease. Volunteers come from APF members, community groups, and high school students. For example, the Oregon High School girl's cross country team volunteers about 60 hours each year. We are thankful for the Foundation's and community's support!