



# Advocate

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy Spring! We are looking forward to another warm-weather season at Devil's Lake State Park. However, we have not waited for warm weather to get busy at the park. We have already organized two volunteer days, and are gearing up for our next event on May 8th (highway cleanup). Since our last newsletter, the Friends have received \$2,420 in generous donations. Donations were given with notations "Happy Birthday DS", and "Thank you Thrivent and supporting Random Acts of Kindness week!" Multiple donations each were given in the memories of Rich Blackmon and Dorothy Weise, who both recently passed. \$50 of the donations were applied to Trails Maintenance, \$1,875 were designated to the proposed Educational/Interpretive Center," and the remaining donations were designated for "General Support." We truly appreciate the support and will continue to use these donations to improve the park.

I find the best part about being the president of the Friends is the opportunity to meet and learn about others who love the park. As a retired nomad (I have lived in Ohio, California, Colorado, Washington State, and Illinois.) who has finally set firm roots in the soils above our Precambrian bedrock since 2010, I am still learning about the history of the area. When the Friends received a substantial donation (\$1,875) from the estate of Tom Bair, I reached out to a longtime close friend and the executor of Mr. Bair's estate, Mr. Tom Slezak of Maryland.

I asked Mr. Slezak if he could provide a story about Tom, which he kindly did, and can be found on page 5 of this Newsletter. Mr. Slezak also provided a photograph of the two Toms at the Devi-Bara, a resort formerly located outside of the park. That really piqued my curiosity; and thus, I decided to reach out to our local historical expert, Mr. Paul Wolter,

executive director of the Sauk County Historical Society (SCHS) to find out more about the Devi-Bara. Paul provided amazing photographs of the old Devi-Bara Resort and provided excerpts from Joe Ward's book "Baraboo 1850-2010 Chronology of the Growth of the Commercial and Retail Districts. He also provided a large collection of historical



 Courtesy of the Sauk County Historical Society

photographs of the resort. The chronology document is available online on the Baraboo Public Library website.

According to the document, L.H. Hill and his brother F. H. Seubold purchased 8 acres of land in April of 1922 from the state, which was previously owned by American Refractory. In June of the same year, they opened as the Devi-Bara Resort which was comprised of a hotel building and 6 cottages situated amidst an apple orchard. In 1930 the Devi-Bara added a 200-seat capacity dining room and approximate 6,800 square foot Club House with 10 rooms, each with its own

bathroom and closet. Mr. Hill's family owned farmland nearby, and after purchasing the land between his own land and the Devil-Bara, had a total of 300 acres where they also grew vegetables, and raised cattle for dairy and meat for the resort and other hotels he owned. The Devi-Bara resort was a popular destination for locals and tourists until it was sadly destroyed by fire in 1980. The document further describes the Devi-Bara as being located north of "Shadowtown." Shadowtown? I am thinking I will need to do some more research about this... I would like to thank the Sauk County

Historical Society for pointing me in the right direction and for being such a wealth of information. If you haven't done so before, please check out their website for a vast array of local history at [saukcountyhistory.org/](http://saukcountyhistory.org/).

As always, the Friends truly appreciate your support, and if you ever have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

Bernadette Greenwood  
President



*If you would like to read the entire document that pertains to Devil's Lake State Park you can enter this URL: <https://tinyurl.com/yz3gvrpk>, or just scan this QR code on the right.*

## FRIENDS VOLUNTEER DAYS

We have had two successful volunteer events so far this year led by our board member and Friends volunteer coordinator, David Parr. Since the weather was so nice in March, we decided to start a little early. On March 13th we had 15 DLSP enthusiasts who were eager to clean up our special park. How amazing is that? Then on April 10th, the Friends partnered with the Wisconsin Climbers Association (WCA) and organized 25 volunteers to clean graffiti off of our revered rock formations. The crew worked at Devil's Doorway, Pot Holes Trail, Balanced Rock trail and above the boulder fields. It is sad to think that people can be so insensitive to how valued these areas are, but the Friends are committed to continue to educate park visitors to think before they deface our sacred park.

It would appear from this photograph (right) taken a very long time ago, that graffiti has been an issue at the park as long as visitors have been coming to the park. We hope that in this case we can stop history from repeating itself!



Nick Wilkes, cropped

Courtesy of the Sauk County Historical Society



## Our next volunteer day is Saturday May 8th.

We have officially adopted State Highway 113 from DL to South Lake Road in addition to the section of County Highway DL from North Shore Drive. Dan Dingmann, our highway cleanup coordinator, has created a detailed cleanup schedule. We will gather at Steinke Basin at 9:00 am for a short safety and instructional meeting and for volunteers to receive their highway cleanup assignments. Vests, garbage bags, and nitrile gloves will be available. Masks and social distancing will be required. Please visit our website and social media sites for additional information.

# WELCOME, SETH TAFT!

*New Social Media Director for the Friends*

Hey everyone! My name is Seth Taft, and I am from Baraboo. My full-time job is an archaeologist for the Wisconsin Historical Society. When I'm not traveling the state studying the human past and looking for artifacts, I am always out exploring the outdoors. I regularly enjoy hiking, bouldering, thru backpacking, skiing, running and kayaking (among many other outdoor recreational activities.) I am a longtime frequent visitor to Devil's Lake State Park. It's often my "home away from home."

I'm incredibly excited to be a part of the Friends of Devil's Lake State Park to not only promote some of the majestic views but more importantly share the experiences of those who come to explore and connect with Wisconsin's most popular state park. I look forward to this fun position while meeting those who are a part of the Devil's Lake State Park community.



 Meeting before garbage cleanup at the park



## PET WASTE STATION

In late February, our board member Jayne Englebert and her husband were saddened, surprised, and disgusted by the amount of dog waste along trails at Steinke Basin. They estimated that there were at least 50 to 60 piles of dog excrement. Although Devil's Lake State Park is a natural area, it is not appropriate or allowed to leave pet waste. Jayne wondered if a pet waste station might help. Accordingly, at our next board meeting, the Friends voted unanimously to sponsor a station at Steinke Basin, and the WDNR installed a station soon after. We hope this will help spread the message that it is NOT okay to leave dog waste at any location at the park. If we see positive results, perhaps more can be added. Thank you, Jayne!

# SELF-GUIDED OUTDOOR FUN!

By Sue Johansen-Mayolett, Park Naturalist



Everyone at the park is anxiously awaiting the start of programs and events again at Devil’s Lake! Until that time, there are several ways you can have your own self-guided adventures. See below for ways you and your family and friends can have some fun in the outdoors.

The District Naturalists in Wisconsin State Parks have been busy creating Nature Discovery Kits for the OutWiGo website (You can find these kits at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/outwigo> .) Inside each virtual kit are many fun things to do while exploring the great outdoors. Different topics are added to the site every two weeks and activities are developed for fun anywhere – whether it’s in your backyard, at a local county park, or at one of many Wisconsin State Park properties.

The Nature Discovery Kits are not the only self-guided fun. You and your family can also participate in the Wisconsin Explorer Program. There are three age levels in the program (3-5 years, 6-8 years and 9 years and up). Inside each booklet, you’ll find nature activities, scavenger hunts, games, hikes, and crafts that will help you and your family explore Wisconsin’s natural resources. Once you complete the requirements listed in the booklet, you can earn a collectable state symbol patch!

If you want to do self-guided exploring that helps you get to know Devil’s Lake better, pick up a 2021 Visitor

Guide. Check out pages 11-16. There are bingo games, geology scavenger hunts, and a GPS history adventure for you to do while you visit the park.

To find out when the park will be able to start programs and events again and what is scheduled, check out the Wisconsin DNR’s calendar at <https://dnr.wi.gov/calendar/events/parks> . If you are visiting the park, check for program announcements and event calendars at the North Shore Nature and Visitor Centers. Until then, have some self-guided outdoor fun with your friends and family.



## TOM BAIR: HIS DREAMS AND MEMORIES OF DEVIL'S LAKE STATE PARK



 Tom Bair (left) with Tom Slezak at the Devi-Bara Resort



***“We all have our time machines.  
Some take us back, they’re called memories.  
Some take us forward, they’re called dreams.”  
- Jeremy Lyons***

Baraboo native Tom Bair was a devoted, career educator who relished a lifelong love for Devil’s Lake State Park. After 30 plus years of teaching at a variety of school systems in Wisconsin, Michigan, Louisiana, and then finally in Texas, where he concluded his career by teaching adult basic education to the incarcerated for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, an experience he described as one of the most important and satisfying work of his entire teaching career. Once fully retired, he felt it was time to fulfill his dream of returning home to Baraboo, in large part due to his affection for Devil’s Lake. So, in 2001, he returned. He once told me that no matter where he was, teaching or travelling (and he travelled a lot), “no park, no place” could match what he called the “hauntingly beautiful Devil’s Lake State Park.” As a youngster, Tom recalled how he and his Baraboo school buddies would spend endless days at the Lake swimming, climbing the bluffs, fishing, or just hanging out around the chateau. During the mid-1960s, when it was time for college (UW-Whitewater), he secured work at Devil’s Lake in the summers to help pay for his tuition. He worked at the South Shore concession stand as well as the North Shore Chateau. He even spent one year registering campers at South Shore. He never forgot the people who made his memories so special; people like Merle Hanley, the cigar chomping manager of the Chateau, who, along with his beautiful wife Ruth, ran the Chateau like a fine-tuned machine. He was also very fond of

the South Shore concession manager, Herb Steckenbauer, who would occasionally share war stories with Tom when business was slow. Tom Brockley and Richard Bates served as DNR policemen who kept the campers and park visitors on the straight and narrow. Yes, even in the good old days, law enforcement was a necessity at Devil’s Lake. Tom was particularly fond of Park Naturalist Ken Lange, who, if asked, was always generous sharing his knowledge of wildlife or plant life in the Park. “Truly a gentleman’s gentleman,” Tom would say. Then there were his high school classmates, Mike Fitzgerald and Dan Mannix, who worked as lifeguards at the Lake and, as Tom often noted “they seemed to always get dates with the pretty girls who were camping at the Lake with their families.” Of course, there were the parties at the St. John’s family South Shore cabin. All good memories of a magical time at a magical place. So, at the age of 58, Tom was back in Baraboo, and now just a wee bit too old to climb the bluffs, but nevertheless, made a habit, be it rain, snow or sunshine, to walk one of the park’s trails every day. He maintained this regimen for many years until poor health eventually deprived him of a walking routine he dearly loved. In his early 70s, and not wanting to deprive himself of time at Devil’s Lake, he served as a volunteer at the North Shore Nature Center under the direction of current Park Naturalist Sue Johansen-Mayoeth.

Tom Bair was lucky: his dream came true. After a long career in various locations, he finally came home and was able to rekindle his love for the Lake with daily visits; and thus, completed a true lifetime of memories of Devil’s Lake. We should all be so lucky. He passed away on October 27, 2018, but his memory will live on at Devil’s Lake State Park.

*Written by Tom Slezak*



## GREETINGS FROM THE PARK

*Superintendent's Report*

The park has come alive now that we are experiencing the rollercoaster weather of spring in Wisconsin. Park staff have an active two months in the spring to wrap-up as many winter projects as possible, begin seasonal operation start-ups in our buildings and campgrounds, and initiate recruitment, hiring and training of new limited term employees. The emerald ash borer continues to add to the workload of ash tree cutting throughout the picnic areas and campgrounds of the park. If you have taken a spring walk on any of the trails you can look out through the woods to see the decline of hundreds of ash trees on the bluffs and other wooded areas. Staff began aerating and overseeding the picnic areas on the North Shore last fall. This spring, they have continued some of that work and restricted access to give the grass a chance to establish before the summer crowds arrive. In the next couple weeks, new picnic grills and expanded accessible pads will be added throughout the North Shore. This funding was directly provided by a match Stewardship Grant applied for by the Friends Board. Park staff and our partners are constantly evaluating the types of recreational experiences and opportunities we offer to the public. Our strongest partnerships are with the Friends of Devil's Lake State Park and the Devil's Lake Concession Corporation.

📷 *Prairie fields at Steinke Basin, photo taken by Bernadette Greenwood*

Our seasonal operations have been slightly delayed this year with the well water and drinking system project that has been active since the fall of last year. The department has committed \$1.6 million to improve and provide safe and reliable drinking water throughout the park. Not only are systems being rehabilitated, they are also improving the electrical services and interconnectivity of one system to another. These changes will decrease the likelihood of system outages from catastrophic failures during peak visitation demands. Due to the scope of this construction some of the amenities, such as flush bathrooms and drinking fountains, have remained off and will continue to be delayed until construction is complete in mid-May.

Finally, if you have ever thought about working in Wisconsin's most magnificent park, now is your chance! We continue to recruit in all areas of the park and opportunities exist with the Devil's Lake Concession Corporation as well. If you prefer to volunteer, the Friend's workdays on the second Saturday of each month continue to gain interest as the season progresses. Regardless, get out and enjoy the park.

**Jim Carter**  
*Superintendent*

# GARLIC MUSTARD PESTO!

Written by Jayne Englebert, Member at Large



One of the original goals of the Friend's of Devil's Lake State Park was to eradicate invasive wild garlic mustard in the park by mobilizing teams of volunteers to pick it. Sadly, it quickly became clear that we would need an army of volunteers to tackle the task.

I have noticed several posts on Facebook lately sharing ideas for cooking using garlic mustard plants. One of the most popular is using it to make a pesto. A quick internet search revealed pesto recipes using garlic mustard on the following websites: ediblewildplants.com, food52.com, farmsteady.com and many others.

So now we are calling on all Friends' members to pick as much garlic mustard as they can and use it to make a delicious garlic mustard pesto for your next pasta meal. While you are prohibited from picking wildflowers and other native plants in the park, garlic mustard is classified as an invasive by the DNR, and you can pick as much as you would like! More information on garlic mustard, including how to identify it, can be found at: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/GarlicMustard.html>

Please containerize all picked garlic mustard and safely dispose of any portions of the plant that you do not use in your cooking to ensure that it does not spread any further in Wisconsin. You can even stop in at the Visitor's Center to get a garbage bag to use to collect garlic mustard or to pick up garbage at the park if you forgot one.



## FRIENDS OF DEVIL'S LAKE STATE PARK – MEMBERSHIP FORM

### Membership Options:

- \$30 - 1 year individual
- \$80 - 3 year discounted individual
- \$50 - 1 year family
- \$140 - 3 year discounted family

### Support for Devil's Lake:

- I wish to make a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the Friends towards General Support, or specifically towards (circle one):
- Educational Interpretive Center      Trail Maintenance
- Publish this donation as Anonymous

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Contact for Newsletters/General Information:    Email    Postal Address    (circle one)

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail payments to: **Friends of Devil's Lake State Park, Inc.**  
 P.O. Box 209  
 Baraboo, WI 53913

or visit our website [friendsofdevillake.org](http://friendsofdevillake.org) to join or donate!

Memberships can be gifted too; just provide the name and contact information for the recipient.



Friends of Devil's Lake State Park  
P.O. Box 209  
Baraboo, WI 53913

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

*Membership paid through year shown on label.*



## **SPREAD THE WORD... *About the Friends!***

Our members are special advocates for our unique, beautiful wonder we call Devil's Lake State Park. Will you also be an advocate to help build our membership?

### ***Tell a friend the value of a Friends' Membership:***

1. Membership fees go directly toward supporting Devil's Lake State Park.
2. Members receive a quarterly newsletter, the "Advocate" by mail and/or email.

3. Members are updated first when we have news to share or for volunteer opportunities.
4. Know that members' fees also go toward funding Devil's Lake State Park community events such as the Halloween Hike and Candlelight Snowshoe.
5. Friends are invited to member-only events and meetings.
6. Receive 10% discount on food and merchandise at Devil's Lake State Park concessions (*some exclusions may apply*).

## **WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP OUR PARK BEAUTIFUL**

 *Nick Wilkes, cropped*

